

# **Report to Congress on U.S.-India Security Cooperation**

**U.S. Department of Defense**

**November 2011**

Preparation of this report/study cost the Department of Defense a total of approximately \$12,000 for the 2012 Fiscal Year.

## Report Documentation Page

*Form Approved  
OMB No. 0704-0188*

Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.

1. REPORT DATE <b>NOV 2011</b>	2. REPORT TYPE	3. DATES COVERED <b>00-00-2011 to 00-00-2011</b>		
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE <b>Report to Congress on U.S.-India Security Cooperation</b>			5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
			5b. GRANT NUMBER	
			5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S)			5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
			5e. TASK NUMBER	
			5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) <b>U.S. Department of Defense, 529 14th Street, Washington, DC, 20004</b>			8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)			10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
			11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT <b>Approved for public release; distribution unlimited</b>				
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES				
14. ABSTRACT				
15. SUBJECT TERMS				
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT <b>Same as Report (SAR)</b>	
a. REPORT <b>unclassified</b>	b. ABSTRACT <b>unclassified</b>	c. THIS PAGE <b>unclassified</b>		
			18. NUMBER OF PAGES <b>9</b>	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON

## **Introduction**

The relationship between the United States and India – what President Obama has called one of the defining partnerships of the 21<sup>st</sup> century – is a priority for the U.S. Government and for the U.S. Department of Defense. The United States and India are natural partners, destined to be closer because of shared interests and values and our mutual desire for a stable and secure world. A strong bilateral partnership is in U.S. interests and benefits both countries. We expect India's importance to U.S. interests to grow in the long-run as India, a major regional and emerging global power, increasingly assumes roles commensurate with its position as a stakeholder and a leader in the international system.

### **I. Current State of U.S.-India Security Cooperation**

Over the past decade, there has been a rapid transformation in the U.S.-India defense relationship. What was once a nascent relationship between unfamiliar nations has now evolved into a strategic partnership between two of the preeminent security powers in Asia. Today, U.S.-India defense ties are strong and growing. Our defense relationship involves a robust slate of dialogues, military exercises, defense trade, personnel exchanges, and armaments cooperation. Our efforts over the past ten years have focused on relationship-building and establishing the foundation for a long-term partnership. The strong ties between our two militaries reflect this. The United States remains committed to a broad defense trade relationship that enables transfers of some of our most advanced technologies.

#### *Frameworks for Cooperation*

The 2005 New Framework Agreement provides the overarching structure for the U.S.-India defense relationship. The Defense Policy Group (DPG), chaired by the U.S. Under Secretary of Defense for Policy and the Indian Defense Secretary, is at the apex of the bilateral defense relationship. In addition to facilitating dialogue on issues of mutual interest, the DPG sets priorities for defense cooperation, reviews progress annually, and directs adjustments as necessary. The 2011 DPG prioritized maritime security, humanitarian assistance/disaster relief (HA/DR), and counterterrorism cooperation. Under the DPG umbrella, we have seven subgroups to discuss and advance defense trade, service-to-service cooperation, technical cooperation, and technology security.

Additional framework agreements help guide interactions in key areas such as maritime security and counterterrorism. The *2006 Indo-U.S. Framework for Maritime Security Cooperation* signaled our intent to cooperate against a wide range of maritime threats, including: transnational crime (piracy, smuggling, and trafficking); maritime proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; threats to safety of ships, crew, and property (safety of navigation, search and rescue); environmental degradation; and natural disasters.

The *U.S.-India Counterterrorism Cooperation Initiative (CCI)*, signed on July 23, 2010, further calls on our countries' coast guards and navies to increase exchanges on maritime security and cooperate in addressing maritime threats like piracy and terrorism.

## *Military-to-Military Relations*

Beginning in 1995, continuously expanding military-to-military relations – and the people-to-people ties that underpin them – have enabled the broader strategic partnership between the United States and India. Our robust exercise program, reciprocal visits by distinguished visitors, and growing personnel exchange opportunities are bringing the United States and India closer together.

### Exercises

U.S.-India military exercises have grown dramatically in size, scope and sophistication. We now have regular exercises across all services that help to deepen our military and defense relationships. In FY11, there were 56 cooperative events across all Services – more than India conducted with any other country. In 2010, the U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM) and the Indian Integrated Defense Staff (IDS) conducted the inaugural Joint Exercise India (JEI) tabletop exercise in Alaska. JEI is a joint<sup>1</sup>, combined<sup>2</sup> exercise based on a HA/DR scenario and is a significant step in the evolution of our exercise program because it facilitates multiservice and bilateral cooperation. JEI may include a command post exercise in 2012.

**Navy and Coast Guard:** Naval cooperation between the United States and India helped to lay the groundwork for military-to-military cooperation and our exercises continue to evolve in complexity. Our navies conduct four exercises annually: MALABAR, HABU NAG (naval aspects of amphibious operations), SPITTING COBRA (explosive ordnance destruction focus), and SALVEX (diving and salvage). MALABAR is the premier annual bilateral maritime exercise conducted to reinforce maritime tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) of both nations. In alternate years, MALABAR has been a multinational exercise, in the past including the navies of Japan, Australia, and Singapore. HABU NAG is also increasing in scale and complexity, and was conducted this year in conjunction with USPACOM's JEI to leverage the complementary characteristics of amphibious and HA/DR operations.

These exercises are important vehicles in developing professional relationships and familiarity between the two navies and run the gamut of high-end naval warfare, including integrated air/missile defense, anti-surface warfare, anti-submarine warfare, and naval special warfare. In addition to the annual Pacific Fleet-Indian Navy Executive Steering Group meeting, we also hold regular naval bilateral staff talks, engage in port visits, and conduct personnel exchanges at all ranks. The U.S. Coast Guard, with the support of the Departments of Defense and Homeland Security, has also recently begun engagement and training with the Indian Coast Guard.

**Army:** The U.S. Army's engagement with India centers on the annual YUDH ABHYAS exercise. Conceived in 2001, YUDH ABHYAS exercising commenced in 2004 – the first year our conventional armies exercised together in India since 1962. YUDH ABHYAS has expanded

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<sup>1</sup> As outlined in Joint Publication 1-02, the U.S. Department of Defense defines joint as “activities, operations, organizations, etc., in which elements of two or more Military Departments participate.”

<sup>2</sup> As outlined in Joint Publication 1-02, the U.S. Department of Defense defines combined activities as “between two or more forces or agencies of two or more allies. (When all allies or services are not involved, the participating nations and services shall be identified, e.g., combined navies.)”

from a company-size field training exercise to battalion live fire exercises and brigade-level command post exercises. In addition to the Executive Steering Group meeting convened annually between our armies, there have also been numerous subject matter expert exchanges on challenges of mutual concern, including countering improvised explosive devices.

**Marines:** Although India does not have a direct counterpart to the U.S. Marine Corps, the Indian Army desires engagement with our Marine Corps to develop the capabilities of its amphibious units. Exercise SHATRUJEET is an annual, reciprocal, company-sized, ground field training exercise that could easily be expanded in size and scope. Since 2010, SHATRUJEET has focused on amphibious doctrine and operations.

**Air Force:** COPE INDIA, meant to be held bi-annually, is the primary exercise between our air forces. The last COPE INDIA, held in Agra, India, in October 2009, focused on mobility operations in a humanitarian assistance scenario. The IAF intends to participate in RED FLAG-NELLIS in 2013, likely with both fighters and airborne warning and control system aircraft. RED FLAG is a joint, combined training exercise that provides a peacetime “battlefield” to train interoperability across a variety of mission sets, including interdiction, air superiority, defense suppression, airlift, aerial refueling, and reconnaissance. The IAF last participated in RED FLAG-NELLIS in 2008. In June 2010, the U.S. Air Force (USAF) and IAF conducted a UNIFIED ENGAGEMENT seminar focused on planning for future employment of airpower concepts, including: intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance planning; targeting hardened and deeply-buried targets; and combat search and rescue operations. The course of air force engagement is charted annually at the Pacific Air Forces (PACAF)-IAF Executive Steering Group, and several subject matter expert exchanges and exchanges are conducted annually on topics such as airfield engineering, intelligence, weapons and tactics, and flight safety.

**Special Operations Forces (SOF):** U.S. SOF interacts with Indian SOF through Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET) events, incorporated as part of Service-sponsored exercises MALABAR, YUDH ABHYAS, and COPE INDIA. VARJA PRAHAR is the SOF-exclusive exercise with India. It focuses on advanced rifle marksmanship, combat marksmanship, close-quarters combat, helicopter insertion, medical evacuation, combined mission planning, and scenario-based missions.

### Operational Cooperation

The United States and India have partnered closely on HA/DR. We have incorporated disaster relief scenarios and elements into existing exercises and have established a working group to coordinate disaster relief activities more effectively. In 2005, we introduced the U.S.-India Disaster Response Initiative to spur greater training and engagement to prepare for combined responses to future disasters in the Indian Ocean Region.

Additionally, the U.S. Navy and Indian Navy have cooperated operationally on four separate occasions: security by the Indian Navy for U.S. ships transiting the Strait of Malacca after 9/11; disaster relief efforts after the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004-2005; noncombatant evacuation operations in Lebanon in 2006; and counter-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden since 2008.

### *Defense Trade, Personnel Exchanges, and Armaments Cooperation*

**Defense Sales:** The United States remains committed to being a reliable and transparent defense supplier to India. Since 2002, India has signed more than 20 Foreign Military Sales (FMS) cases for defense articles and services such as C-17 and C-130J aircraft, TPQ-37 radars, Self-Protection Suites (SPS) for VVIP aircraft, specialized tactical equipment, Harpoon missiles, Sensor-Fuzed Weapons, and carrier flight and test pilot school training. In less than a decade, and starting at zero, we have seen the FMS program grow to a combined total case value of approximately \$6 billion.

Defense sales provide the Indian military with capabilities that mutually support both our nations' strategic priorities. Additionally, we view defense sales as a mechanism to enable new training and exchange opportunities between our militaries. The last five years have given us several opportunities to reach a new level of interaction between our militaries through defense trade. The C-130Js delivered beginning in February 2011 are the first U.S. military aircraft to have been delivered to India in half a century and have already been successfully employed to provide critical humanitarian assistance following an earthquake in Sikkim in September 2011. As part of that sale, the U.S. Air Force (USAF) trained more than 100 Indian Air Force personnel – including pilots, loadmasters, and maintenance staff. Once the C-17 contract is fulfilled, India will operate the second largest fleet of C-17s in the world. The former USS TRENTON, which was transferred to the Indian Navy in 2007 and christened the INS JALASHWA, has helped the Indian Navy expand its amphibious and expeditionary warfare capabilities.

The United States and India continue to seek ways to educate each other on our respective procurement and acquisition systems to enable further compatibility. We are working to find ways to adopt processes that will improve efficiency and make it easier for us to cooperate on defense trade. Over the past seven years, we have sent mobile training teams to India to present courses on the FMS process. U.S. defense personnel also participated in international acquisition seminars hosted by think tanks affiliated with the Indian Ministry of Defence.

**Personnel Exchanges:** Relationship building between U.S. and Indian defense personnel is one of DoD's highest priorities for the U.S.-India defense relationship. To take one example, the U.S. and Indian Air Forces currently maintain a standing T-38/Kiran instructor pilot exchange between Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi and AFS Hakimpet in Hyderabad, India. We pursue many other personnel exchange opportunities to help build the foundation and connections essential for a robust partnership. Towards this end, the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program is a useful tool. The FY 2010 and FY 2011 IMET programs focused on exchange programs to enhance familiarity with each country's armed forces, strengthen professionalism, and facilitate cooperation during bilateral exercises and strategy discussions. Courses included Army War College, Air Command and Staff College, Naval Staff College, International Officer Preparation, the Judge Advocate Staff Officer course, and training in medical services, aircraft maintenance and maritime search/rescue. Additionally, the Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies (APCSS) has hosted more than 200 military and civilian Indian participants across all ministries. India has also established an APCSS alumni association.

**Armaments Cooperation:** Armaments cooperation is another key component of our defense engagement with India. India's capabilities in technology are rapidly improving, particularly in the private sector. In the defense sector, India has over fifty defense laboratories in the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), presenting opportunities for collaboration over a broad range of defense technologies and systems. Naval Postgraduate School and DRDO are implementing a letter of agreement signed in February 2011 establishing an educational exchange program and joint research project program.

To date, acquisition and technology cooperation between India and the United States has been primarily in the exchange of science and technology (S&T) information and collaboration in S&T projects. Some areas of current cooperation include power and energy, micro-aerial vehicles, situational awareness, energetics, and human effectiveness. The progress that has been made in armaments cooperation between the United States and India is notable, especially when compared to similar relationships with other countries, and given the relatively short time that the U.S.-India defense relationship has been developing.

## **II. Enhancing U.S.-India Security Cooperation**

Over the next five years, we will continue to build the support structures necessary to ensure the maturation of a robust and mutually beneficial defense relationship with India in the Asia-Pacific and globally. We will advance the defense relationship by deepening people-to-people ties through continued military-to-military engagements, implementing agreed upon cooperation and pursuing new avenues of collaboration with particular emphasis on maritime security and counterterrorism activities, and expanding defense trade and armaments cooperation.

### *Bolstering Military-to-Military Engagements*

**Combined Exercises:** We plan to conduct increasingly complex joint and combined exercises with a focus on counterterrorism, maritime security, and HA/DR across all of the Services. Additionally, we will work together to convert the skills attained during these exercises into practical cooperation and action. As we continue to expand operational coordination in the Indian Ocean, we should continue to seek opportunities to exercise multilaterally with partners in the region. These habits of cooperation could facilitate timely responses to crises, such as those often triggered in the region by natural disasters.

**Personnel Exchanges and Training:** The relationships between our military personnel are strong and will continue to grow over the five-year horizon. At the 2011 DPG, both countries agreed to exchange lists of possible personnel exchange and training opportunities to help expand people-to-people ties between our military leaders at all levels. To that end, the United States is looking for ways to expand the formal Personnel Exchange Program for India across all of the Services. To maximize exchange and training opportunities offered by India, the United States will also seek to expand the number of U.S. officers regularly attending Indian Professional Military Education Schools, as well as other Indian military professional development schools. The objective is to increase the number of service personnel in each country who understand their Indian or U.S. counterparts.

## *Implementing Cooperation on Maritime Security and Counterterrorism*

As our robust exercise slate and ongoing operational cooperation demonstrate, some of the most promising U.S.-India defense cooperation takes place in the maritime domain. As we look to build on our successes, we will work together to ensure that we actualize the cooperation already agreed upon in the *2006 Indo-U.S. Framework for Maritime Security Cooperation*. Deepening maritime security cooperation with India holds great potential over the next five years across a range of issues, including, but not limited to, maritime domain awareness, countering piracy, and HA/DR.

On the counterterrorism front, the United States continues to focus on al-Qa'ida and other terrorist threats that emanate from South Asia. For some of these groups, particularly Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LT), India remains the primary target. LT's activities continue to threaten U.S. interests and South Asian regional stability. Therefore, we will continue to follow the guidance of our National Strategy for Counterterrorism which calls for joining with key partners, like India, to share the burdens of our common security goals. In doing so, we will seek to expand counterterrorism cooperation with India, and our current special operations engagements in the region will continue to focus on the mutually beneficial ways in which we can enhance each other's capabilities.

In both instances, DoD will work with the State Department and other interagency colleagues as appropriate to work with India in the emerging Asian regional security architecture and other multilateral forums, such as the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting-Plus.

**Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA):** The United States would like to continue to work with India to improve our capabilities to identify threats in the maritime domain. We will continue to establish processes and capabilities to fuse information, especially across U.S. Combatant Command seams. Initiatives are already underway between the U.S. Navy and Indian Navy on MDA, and we will continue to look for ways to expand MDA information exchanges.

**Countering Piracy:** India's capability and capacity to participate in counter-piracy operations has been demonstrated consistently during the annual MALABAR exercise and in its counter-piracy operations off its west coast. The United States appreciates India's deployment of naval vessels to support counter-piracy operations through the SHADE (Shared Awareness and Deconfliction) mechanism. We will increasingly seek Indian participation and leadership in external operations or exercises related to interdiction, piracy, and port access. The United States appreciates India's continued contribution to the counter-piracy mission in the western Indian Ocean and will support India's leadership role in regional counter-piracy efforts.

**Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Response and Relief (HA/DR):** In the next five years, the United States will continue to request India's participation in future PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP missions, the annual U.S. Pacific Fleet HA/DR event in the USPACOM area of responsibility. Indian inclusion would provide an opportunity to apply HA/DR lessons learned in other forums to a humanitarian civil assistance scenario with overlapping skill set requirements, and prepare for combined operations in an actual HA/DR event.

**Naval and Coast Guard Cooperation:** The U.S. Navy would like to work with the Indian Navy to improve capabilities to perform higher-end, operational missions in the Indian Ocean region as the strategic context dictates. Naval aviation, both maritime surveillance and carrier, provides immediate opportunities for this type of cooperation. Amphibious operations is another viable area in which to increase cooperation and capabilities. We could also exchange information on future capacity building plans during defense bilateral meetings to ensure regional capacity building efforts with third countries are complementary. The United States supports a strong U.S. Coast Guard – Indian Coast Guard relationship.

**Counterterrorism:** The *2010 Counterterrorism Cooperation Initiative* opened the door for increased cooperation and collaboration on counterterrorism (CT) issues. We will continue to seek greater cooperation in information-sharing activities as well as in our training, exercises, and exchanges between CT specialists and on CT capabilities. USPACOM seeks to increase its Joint Combined Exchange Training exercises with India. Additionally, USPACOM will continue to train higher-ranking officers through the Combating Terrorism Fellowship Program (CTFP), which, in FY11, succeeded in training two dozen Indian officers during various CT-related courses and seminars.

#### *Expanding Defense Trade and Armaments Cooperation*

Over the next five years, the United States will continue to establish itself as a reliable defense supplier to India and look for opportunities to enable further training and exchanges between our militaries as India continues its military modernization. The Department of Defense, along with the Departments of State and Commerce, will advocate for U.S. solutions to Indian defense needs. We recognize that India is also seeking to build its own indigenous defense industry, and is looking for the best technologies to use in its defense sector. The United States wants to develop deeper defense industrial cooperation with India, including a range of cooperative research and development activities. The United States is committed to providing India with top-of-the-line technology.

### **III. Joint Strike Fighter and Potential Co-Development of Military Weapons Systems**

The Department of Defense is continually looking for ways to expand defense cooperation with India. We are seeking opportunities for increased science and technology cooperation that may lead to co-development opportunities with India as a partner.

India has demonstrated its interest in upgrading its inventory of fighter aircraft. It intends to purchase 126 medium multi-role combat aircraft and is working with Russia on the development of the Sukhoi/HAL Fifth Generation Fighter Aircraft (FGFA). The U.S. F-16 and F-18 competed, but were not down-selected, in the Medium Multi-Role Combat Aircraft (MMRCA) competition in April 2011. Despite this setback, we believe U.S. aircraft, such as the Joint Strike Fighter (JSF), to be the best in the world. Should India indicate interest in the JSF, the United States would be prepared to provide information on the JSF and its requirements (infrastructure, security, etc.) to support India's future planning.

The United States has taken many steps in recent years to facilitate science and technology and research and development cooperation with India. In so doing, we have signaled our unambiguous intent to pursue cooperative opportunities on increasingly sophisticated systems. As our relationship continues to mature, we expect co-development of armaments to become a reality.